GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2418
ANSWERED ON:11.03.2016
Malnutrition in Children
Ajmal Maulana Badruddin;Arunmozhithevan Shri A.;Ashok Kumar Shri K.;Rao Shri Rayapati Sambasiva;Singh Shri Pashupati Nath;Sonker Smt. Neelam

Will the Minister of WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware that malnutrition in India has declined but continues to be among the highest in the world;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) the details of the schemes implemented by the Government to address the problem of malnutrition in the country, State-wise including Uttar Pradesh and Bihar;

(d) whether the Government has adequate monitoring mechanism to ensure that the funds allocated for such schemes reach the targeted beneficiaries;

(e) if so, the details thereof;

(f) whether the Government proposes to strengthen the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) scheme by initiating capacity building measures for Anganwadi workers by providing them promotional abilities; and

(g) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken by the Government in this regard?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF WOMEN AND CHILD DEVELOPMENT
(SHRIMATI MANEKA SANJAY GANDHI)

(a) & (b) As per nutrition data available for children under 5 years of age from National Family Health Survey NFHS−3 (2005-06), commissioned by Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 42.5% are underweight, 48.0% are stunted and 19.8% are wasted which has come down substantially as per Rapid Survey of Children (RSoC), 2013-14 commissioned by Ministry of Women and Child Development, 29.4% are underweight, 38.7% are stunted and 15.1% are wasted. These figures are not highest in the world as evident upon examination of the UNICEF Report 'State of the World's Children 2015'.

Malnutrition is complex, multi-dimensional and inter-generational in nature, needing convergence of interventions, coordination and concerted action from various sectors. The causes are inadequate access to food, health services, safe drinking water, sanitation and environmental conditions, educational levels, income and socio-cultural factors like early marriage, etc. Situation is further compounded by ignorance about nutritional needs of infants and young children and repeated infections.

(c) The Government has accorded high priority to the issue of malnutrition and is implementing several schemes/programmes of different Ministries/Departments through State Governments/UT Administrations including in Uttar Pradesh and Bihar.

This Ministry is implementing programmes such as ICDS, RGSEAG namely 'Sabla', and IGMSY as direct targeted interventions. The details of these schemes are available in the Annual Report (2014-15) of the Ministry, which is available in the Library of the House and is also available on the Ministry's website, www.wcd.nic.in.

Besides, Food and Nutrition Board (FNB) of the Ministry of Women and Child Development with its 43 field units in India is engaged in creating awareness in nutrition in collaboration with State Government / institutions through exhibitions; advertisement in audio-visual and print medium; lectures promoting the consumption of balanced diets and inclusion of fruits and vegetables in the daily diets in addition to demonstrations of low cost nutritious recipes using locally available foods; training of field functionaries and training in food preservation for grassroots level workers; celebration of nutrition related events, etc.

All these schemes have potential to address one or other aspect related to Nutrition including nutrition of children.

(d) & (e) The monitoring and supervision mechanism set up under the Integrated Child Development Services (ICDS) Scheme is used for the scheme 'Sabla' and IGMSY as well, to ensure that the funds allocated for such schemes reach the targeted beneficiaries. Performance of the scheme is reviewed on a quarterly/annual basis to identify gaps and for taking corrective measures. Monitoring committees are set up at all levels (National, State, District, Block and Village level) to strengthen the coordination & convergence between concerned departments and take stock of the progress of the scheme.

Moreover, the scheme guidelines also provide for field visits by the State Officials/District Programme Officer (DPO)/Child Development Project Officer (CDPO)/Supervisors as per the supervision schedule under ICDS.

(f) & (g) The ICDS Scheme has been restructured in 2012 which includes capacity building. The guidelines for filling up vacancies in the grade of Supervisors have been revised on 15th September, 2015 to provide for 50% of the vacancies, as against 25% earlier, in the grade of Supervisors to be filled from promotion of Anganwadi Workers with requisite qualifications & experience.

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